

UNITED RECORD PRESSING PLANT
(Southern Plastics Inc. Pressing Plant)
453 Chestnut Street
Nashville
Davidson County
Tennessee

HABS TN-267
HABS TN-267

PHOTOGRAPHS

COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

UNITED RECORD PRESSING PLANT (Southern Plastics Inc. Pressing Plant)

HABS No. TN-267

Location: 453 Chestnut Street, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee

The coordinates for this building are 36.143074 N, -86.769943 W and they were obtained through Bing maps (www.bing.com/maps/) on July 11, 2012. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Present Owner: United Record Pressing, LLC

Present Use: Vinyl record pressing plant for United Record Pressing

Significance: This mid-twentieth-century, mosaic-fronted, concrete-block building is an excellent example of a structure that was purpose built to accommodate one of the music industry-related businesses that grew up in Nashville in the post-war period. It was designed to house a vinyl record pressing plant for Southern Plastics (later United Record Pressing) and has continuously functioned as such since it was first built. Today, it is one of the largest vinyl record pressing plants in the United States.

The building consists of a ground floor (which is partially below grade), a main floor which is equal in size to the ground floor, and a smaller penthouse floor above that. Much of the floor space on the ground and main levels is used for production. There are also several offices on the main floor. The penthouse unit is given over to hospitality and includes an "events room" as well as a suite consisting of a living room, a full bathroom, a double occupancy bedroom and a kitchen. This set of rooms, which was once known as the "United Hilton" and more recently dubbed the "Motown Suite," was built to accommodate Southern Plastics' many African-American customers. At the time of the plant's construction, the South was segregated and finding other forms of lodging would have been problematic.¹ The hospitality rooms retain many of their original fixtures and furnishings.

Among the first records that were pressed at the plant were the Beatles' early American releases on Vee Jay Records as well as discs put out by the Motown label.² Today, the United Record Pressing does all the vinyl pressing for many companies including Universal, Sony, Beggars Banquet, and the Nashville-based Third Man Records.

Historian: Rachel Hopkin, Sally Kress Tompkins Fellow, 2012

¹ *About United Record Pressing*, <http://www.urpressing.com/history.php> (accessed July 13, 2012).

² *About United Record Pressing*, <http://www.urpressing.com/history.php> (accessed July 14, 2012).

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1962-63
2. Architect: Elbridge B White - Hart, Freeland, Roberts (HFR Design).³
3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: The building has been in continuous use as a vinyl record pressing plant since it opened. It was originally occupied by Southern Plastics Inc. and this company later evolved into United Record Pressing.
4. Contractor: T.W. Frierson Contractors⁴
5. Original plans and construction: Copies of the original drawings have been supplied by the architecture firm of HFR Design (see Figures 1 - 5). The architect, Elbridge B White, designed a modern concrete building that was intended to house all the activities of the Southern Plastics company at the time of its construction. White's design was for a structure that consisted of a ground floor, a main (first) floor above that, and a smaller penthouse floor. Within this three-story layout, space was assigned for production, administration and hospitality activities.

The original drawings show that the overall design also addressed the site around the building with, for example, planters and grassy plots adjacent to the main entrance, as well as a number of paved areas. Examination of the information contained within the drawings indicates that there is a good correlation between the original building and site as planned and its present form.

6. Alterations and additions: Based on the original drawings and the physical evidence, the pressing plant building appears to be relatively intact and close to its original form. However, there has been a two-story addition to the rear (south) of the building which was built ca. 1966.⁵ This addition spans the entire width of the building and extends to where a concrete retaining wall once stood at ground level. Because of this addition, a rear concrete loading dock which was present in the original plans for the ground and main floor is no longer extant, although the doorways that were designed to open onto it at the ground level remain within the now-interior wall. The extra space afforded by this addition is used for loading activities at the ground floor level and for record pressing on the main floor. One other notable addition to the original design of the building is a brick chimney that is now centrally situated on the east elevation.

In addition, the plans indicate that when the building was erected, the name of the company at that time - "Southern Plastics, Inc." - was prominently displayed on the front façade close to where the words "United Record Pressing" are now. However, the lettering in the original plans appears to be both larger and placed lower than those in existence today.

³ Hart, Freeland, Roberts is still in operation and is today known as HFR Design. In addition to its office in Nashville, there are also branches in Kansas City, Missouri; Jackson, Tennessee and Louisville, Kentucky. The firm's website address is www.hfrdesign.com.

⁴ T. W. Frierson still exists and the website address of the company is www.twfrierson.com.

⁵ "Trade Presses Spin at Peak," *Billboard* (3 December 1966): 8. <http://www.billboard.com/#/archive> (accessed August 21, 2012).

Within the plant, the layout of the rooms remains the same as, or very similar to, that shown in the original drawings, although there has been some alteration in terms of use of space. For example, the original drawings for the ground floor show an area for “jacket and sleeves storage” and “old stock,” and these spaces are now used for label production. The main floor drawings show there was once a “stock room” in an area now used for record pressing and also a “shipping office.” However, the shipping part of the United Record Pressing operation now takes place in a neighboring building. In addition, there was once an open-plan lounge adjacent to the building’s main reception with only a planter separating the two areas. Today this lounge is now an enclosed office space. The drawings for the penthouse show that the area now designated the “events room” was originally intended to be a conference room and the space now used for a small office used to be a “coat room.” The arrangement of the cabinets and appliances within the kitchen reflect a plan dated November 8, 1962 revising the original July 16, 1962 scheme for this space.

B. Historical Context:

This mid-twentieth century mosaic-fronted concrete-block construction is an excellent example of a structure that was purpose built to accommodate one of the music industry-related businesses that grew up in Nashville in the post-war period. It was built for the Southern Plastics company (which later evolved into United Record Pressing) and was designed to house a vinyl record pressing plant. It has continuously functioned as such since it first opened. Today, it is one of the largest vinyl record pressing plants in the United States.

The earliest incarnation of Southern Plastics was an enterprise called Bullet Plastics which formed as part of Nashville’s burgeoning music industry in the late 1940s.⁶ Bullet Plastics itself began as an offshoot of its sister company, Bullet Records, which was one of the first independent record labels in Nashville and a key player in the development of the city as a commercial music center in the period following the Second World War.⁷

Bullet Records had formed early in 1946 and was headed by Jim Bulleit, a former announcer at the WSM radio station, banker Orville Zickler, and C. V. Hitchcock.⁸⁹ Of these three men, it was C. V. Hitchcock who provides the link connecting the Bullet companies to Southern Plastics. Born in Tennessee’s Van Buren County in 1896, Hitchcock’s start in the music business had come about via his involvement in the jukebox industry. In fact, he had been one of the Nashville’s earliest jukebox operators and owned a store called Hermitage Music on Lower Broadway.¹⁰ His difficulties finding

⁶ Martin Hawkins, *A Shot in the Dark: Making Records in Nashville, 1945-55* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press/Country Music Foundation Press, 2007), 198.

⁷ Colin Escott, “Bullet Records,” in *The Encyclopedia of Country Music*, ed. Paul Kingsbury (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 65.

⁸ The company incorporated as the Bullet Recording and Transcription Company on April 25, 1946, according to a record found in the Tennessee State Library and Archives. Charter filed April 25, 1946. Volume 25, page 157. The names listed on the record of incorporation are Jas. A Bulleit, Rachel C. Bulleit and C. V. Hitchcock. Rachel Bulleit was Jim Bulleit’s wife. The address recorded was 703 Medical Arts Building at 119 7th Ave North. The charter is noted as having been revoked on March 4, 1949.

⁹ Jim Bulleit, interview by Douglas B Green, transcript, February 10, 1976, Frist Library and Archive of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum; Escott, 65.

¹⁰ Hawkins, 19-20.

reliable sources of records for his jukeboxes provided much of the impetus behind the founding of Bullet Records.¹¹

Documents show that in September 1946, five months after Bullet Records formed, its offshoot, Bullet Plastics, was incorporated.¹² However, it appears that Bullet Plastics did not actually get up and running in any practical sense until over a year later. That came about thanks to the phenomenal success of one of Bullet Records' releases, namely "Near You" by Francis Craig and his orchestra. Craig was a Nashville-based pianist and composer and his recording of "Near You," an easy-listening serenade, became one of the best-selling records of 1947 and remained on the *Billboard* chart for months.¹³ Demand for the record was so high and so unexpected that Bullet Records had difficulty obtaining sufficient copies to fulfill orders. Ordinarily the company worked with just a handful of pressing plants scattered around the north of the U.S.A and in Los Angeles, but at the peak of the success of "Near You," as many as twenty-eight factories were working to press additional copies and Jim Bulleit had to travel to New York to secure extra capacity.¹⁴

This experience apparently brought into focus the necessity of making Bullet Plastics an active concern, not least because Jim Bulleit suspected that some of the pressing companies were cheating him and selling copies of "Near You" on the sly. In order to get Bullet Plastics up and running, Bulleit travelled to California where he bought the equipment of a "distressed pressing plant" from a man by the name of Jim Beard.¹⁵ Said equipment was then shipped to the location of the soon-to-be home of Bullet Plastics - a Quonset hut at Lot T-314, Berry Field, Nashville.¹⁶ Jim Beard also made the trip in order to help supervise the establishment of the plant, while a local Nashville man, John Dunn, was put in charge of the new venture.¹⁷ Dunn would become a key figure, the only one who is known to have been involved with Bullet Plastics, Southern Plastics and United Record Pressing.

On November 2, 1947, an article in the *Nashville Tennessean* signaled the plant's imminent opening with this announcement:

Bullet Records, which gained national attention by its recording of Francis Craig's "Near You," will open a record pressing plant in Nashville within six weeks, it was announced yesterday.

¹¹ Escott, 65. The first record released on the Bullet label was *Zeb's Mountain Boogie* by Brad Brady and it was issued in May 1946. Brad Brady was a pseudonym for Zeb Turner and Owen Bradley. Owen Bradley was later the owner of the Quonset Hut and a major figure in the development of Nashville as a center for country music.

¹² Record found in the Tennessee State Library and Archives. Charter filed September 25, 1946. Volume 27, page 55. The names listed on the record of incorporation are James. A Bulleit, C. V. Hitchcock and Orville Zickler. The address is given as 2320 12th Ave. South. The charter was surrendered on December 11, 1951, Surrender Book Volume 25, page 534.

¹³ Hawkins, 62. On January 3, 1948 *Billboard* trade magazine declared "Near You" to have been the top Disc Jockey record of 1947 and also named it number two on the list of top tunes. See *Billboard*, 3 January 1948, 1, <http://www.billboard.com/#/archive> (accessed September 12, 2012).

¹⁴ Jim Bulleit, interview by John Rumble, transcript, May, 4, 1983, Frist Library and Archive of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum; Hawkins, 62-63.

¹⁵ Jim Bulleit, interview by Douglas B Green, 1976. Jim Bulleit, interviewed by John Rumble, 1983.

¹⁶ Hawkins, 64.

¹⁷ Jim Bulleit, interviewed by John Rumble, 1983. A few years later, John Dunn also became the co-founder of Speed Records, a small independent Nashville label, which operated between about 1951 and 1955. See Hawkins, 196 and 198.

Jim Bulleit, president of Bullet Records, said the project involves an investment of about \$50,000 and said the plant will be the first record pressing factory in the South. The plant will be located on Bogle road near Berry field.

Between 25 and 30 skilled workers will be employed, Bulleit said. The record company official said the success of Craig's "Near You", which is currently leading national hit songs, had forced him to make production agreements with more than a dozen record pressing factories, making him decide to open his own here.¹⁸

The operation got underway shortly thereafter. Ogden Stokes, the son of a lawyer involved with the Bullet companies, remembers being taken by his father to the plant and seeing the production first hand. He later recalled that:

The squares of plastic were cooked on a grill, like a short-order cook's, until soft. Then they were transferred on a spatula to one of the vertical presses, which had a stamper from the master recording. I remember the female machine operators using a foot switch, and the steam, which was used to operate the press, would come out, then down would come the press. While it was down she would take a knife and trim the plastic off that had squeezed out at the sides. The yellow labels were put on the press first. The whole place was very dimly lit, it was hot, regardless of the outside temperature, the cut-off plastic was all over the floor, and steam was leaking everywhere. It seemed to me then that this was what hell must look like. I always compared it to Dante's Inferno.¹⁹

By 1948, the dust jackets covering the records pressed at Bullet Plastics were bearing the words: "Bullet - the Fastest Growing Independent Record Company in America."²⁰ Yet despite that, and despite all the success of "Near You", and the optimistic expansion into record pressing, Bullet Records was moving into troubled waters. Jim Bulleit, who was largely in charge of the decisions about who and what to record, had invested much of the company's new-found profits into popular music recordings that were expensive to produce and which did not sell well. As a result, he sold his share of the company to his partners Hitchcock and Zickler. Shortly afterward Zickler also extricated himself from the business. That left Hitchcock at the helm, and he chose to concentrate on Bullet Plastics and let the record label drop.²¹

Working with John Dunn, Hitchcock moved Bullet Plastics' operations from the Berry Field location to the basement of his Hermitage Music premises at 421 Broadway.²² From there, the presses that had been shipped from California produced in the region of two thousand discs a day.²³ Sometime in the early 1950s, Hitchcock and John Dunn renamed the pressing company Southern Plastics.²⁴ Nashville

¹⁸ "Bullet Records to Open Plant for Pressing," *Nashville Tennessean*, 2 November 1947: 16-A.

¹⁹ Hawkins, 64.

²⁰ Hawkins, 65.

²¹ The company scored greater success with its country music and gospel music rosters; Hawkins, 69; Jim Bulleit, interview by John Rumble, 1983.

²² Both the 1951 and the 1953 City Directories show 421 Broadway as being the home of Bullet Plastics and Bullet Recording and Transcription. *Polk's Nashville City Directory* (Nashville Tennessee: R. L. Polk and Co, 1951), 1164; *Polk's Nashville City Directory* (Nashville Tennessee: R. L. Polk and Co, 1953), 1092.

²³ Jim Bulleit interviewed by John Rumble, 1983; Hawkins, 88.

²⁴ The company did not incorporate until 27 September, 1957. Those named on the record of incorporation were C. V. Hitchcock, J. H. Dunn and E. H. Cashion. Eugene Cashion was a long-time collaborator of Hitchcock's; the pair had worked together as jukebox operators and Cashion was also involved in Hitchcock's Hermitage Music store. Source: Record found in the Tennessee State Library and Archives. Charter filed September 27, 1957. Volume 53,

city directories indicate that Southern Plastics remained at 421 Broadway during 1954 and 1955 but by 1956 it had moved to a new location at 512 Franklin Road, where it remained until the early 1960s.²⁵ During this period, changes in record manufacture technology meant that 78 records began to be phased out and replaced by the 33 1/3-rpm long-player and 45-rpm single.²⁶ These two formats - the former introduced to the market by Columbia in 1948 and the latter by RCA Victor a year later - changed the way music was distributed and consumed.²⁷ Southern Plastics was to concentrate on the manufacture of seven-inch 45-rpm singles.²⁸

The first seven-inch 45-rpm single records had been released by RCA on March 31, 1949 amid much fanfare, but once the company's initial marketing campaign waned, so did public interest. In fact, only months after its launch, reports began to surface that RCA intended to ditch its new format. However, within the year a savior came to its rescue in the form of the Seeburg company which began manufacture the first 45-rpm-only jukeboxes. Before long, the seven inch was the unit of choice of jukebox manufacturers and jukebox plays helped to promote particular tracks. Soon customers were beginning to buy 45-rpms for home use. By the mid-1950s, the seven-inch single - a unit that was easy to carry and relatively cheap to buy - had been embraced by the American teenager and become the primary means of disseminating the hippest music of that era.²⁹

Southern Plastics was doing well by the early 1960s. It was turning out in the region of one million disks a month and had secured a contract with Motown Records to press all of that company's singles.³⁰ The firm therefore had the wherewithal and the incentive to expand its operations into a brand new purpose-built plant situated in an industrial area south of downtown.³¹ On May 25, 1963, the *Nashville Tennessean* heralded the move of Southern Plastics to its new building at 453 Chestnut Street with an article headlined "Record Firm in New Plant."³² The article stated that:

Southern Plastics Inc., until this week Nashville's only phonograph record manufacturing plant, has just moved into its own new 20,000-square-foot building at 453 Chestnut Street.³³ This represents an expansion that triples floor space, C. V. Hitchcock, President, said. To celebrate the expansion and 15 years of business here, the company will hold open house from 1 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. today for manufacturers, distributors, and associates of the music industry. Southern Plastics has been operating in leased space at 512 Franklin St. The new plant includes all new Belgian-made equipment, Hitchcock said.

page 683-686. The address is listed as 513 Franklin Street, Nashville, Tennessee. The charter was surrendered on December 31, 1966 (Surrender Book Volume 33, pages 2011-2012).

²⁵ *Polk's Nashville City Directory* (Nashville Tennessee: R. L. Polk and Co, 1954), 955; *Polk's Nashville City Directory* (1955), 1107; *Polk's Nashville City Directory* (1956), 820.

²⁶ Michael McCall, "Turning Around: The colorful past and promising future of United Record Pressing," *Nashville Scene*, 25 March 1999, 21.

²⁷ Piero Scaruffi, *A History of Rock Music 1951-2000* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, Inc.: 2003), 7.

²⁸ Jay Millar, Director of Marketing at United Record Pressing, personal communication with author, August 3, 2012.

²⁹ John Broven, *Record Makers and Breakers: Voices of the Independent Rock 'n' Roll Pioneers* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press: 2009), 79.

³⁰ George Ingram, owner of Nashville Record Productions, personal communication with author, September 5, 2012. "Nashville Says It Always Had 'Sound'," *Billboard* (10 November 1962): 36.

³¹ In 1978, the Herschel Greer Stadium, a minor league baseball park, opened up close to the building.

³² "Record Firm in New Plant," *Nashville Tennessean*, 25 May 1963, 10.

³³ During the week that this article appeared, a new pressing company, called Standard Record Pressing, had opened in Nashville.

Southern Plastics is one of the largest record manufacturing in the South [sic]. There are only three others in the South, it was said - in Atlanta, Coldwater, Miss., and Nashville where Standard Record Pressing Co. is just getting underway.³⁴

The architect chosen to design the new plant was Elbridge B. White, who was both a partner and the chief architect at one of Tennessee's oldest combined architectural and engineering firms - Hart, Freeland and Roberts.³⁵ An electrical engineer called Ozell Simpkins employed by Southern Plastics was also involved in the design of the production requirements.³⁶ In order to prepare for this undertaking, John Dunn had sent Simpkins to Brussels for two months to observe Belgian pressing plants in action - reputedly the most modern and efficient in the world at that time. He returned home armed with knowledge that enabled him to create a steam-powered pressing line at the new plant.

In the design for the plant, the aim was to have space for production, for administration and for hospitality. Apparently at Simpkins' suggestion, the building included a suite of rooms within a second floor penthouse unit that would provide lodging for visiting African-American customers, including executives from Motown Records.³⁷ This was important because in the period when the plant was constructed, the South was still segregated and so the availability of alternative accommodation options for people of color were limited.³⁸ The set of rooms - which is now called the "Motown Suite" but which was previously known as the "United Hilton" - included a living room, a bedroom with two twin beds, a full bathroom, and a fully equipped kitchen complete with a push button stove.³⁹ The interior design of the suite was modern and fashionable for its time and those who enjoyed its comforts included Motown Records' founder Berry Gordy. George Ingram, who has been providing pre-production services to Southern Plastics/United Record Pressing since the mid-1960s, recently recalled that "when the Motown people came, they tended to party (...). There were a lot of parties and booze and a lot of women."⁴⁰

Besides the Motown work, the Southern Plastics also made discs for Chicago's Vee Jay records, on whose label some of the Beatles first American releases - freshly pressed at the Chestnut Street plant - appeared.⁴¹ Other clients included the Liberty, Chess, and Checker record labels. According to George Ingram, "if you had a hit record during the sixties, you ended up going to Southern Plastics because they had a massive production capacity." This production capacity was increased further when a two-story rear addition to the building was added on in ca. 1966. *Billboard* reported at the time that the extra 4,000 square feet of factory space would allow for the installation of album pressing equipment.⁴²

³⁴ On the following day, Sunday May 26, 1963, a similar article ran, this time entitled "Record Manufacturing Booms in Music City". It commented once again on Southern Plastics expansion (as well as the arrival of the Standard Record Pressing Co. which would be leasing space at 4th Ave. South). See "Record Manufacturing Booms in Music City," *Nashville Tennessean*, 25 May 1963, 14-F.

³⁵ Hart, Freeland and Roberts was established in Nashville in 1920. The company still exists and is now known as HFR Design. See "About HFR Design", <http://www.hfrdesign.com/pages/about-hfr.php> (accessed August 10, 2012). "HFR Design: History," informational document supplied by Janey Morgan, Historian, HFR Design, sent to author on August 29, 2012.

³⁶ Cris Ashworth, former CEO of United Record Pressing, personal communication with author, September 4, 2012; McCall, 26. Both Ashworth and McCall state that Simpkins designed the machines at the plant but C. V. Hitchcock, quoted in the *Tennessean* on May 25, 1963 (see above) had said the machinery was Belgian-made. Perhaps the machine was made under Simpkin's guidance to Belgian specifications following his period spent in the country.

³⁷ McCall, 26.

³⁸ *About United Record Pressing*, <http://www.urpressing.com/history.php> (accessed July 13, 2012).

³⁹ McCall, 26.

⁴⁰ George Ingram, owner of Nashville Record Productions, personal communication with author, September 5, 2012.

⁴¹ *About United Record Pressing*, <http://www.urpressing.com/history.php> (accessed July 14, 2012).

⁴² "Trade Presses Spin at Peak," *Billboard* (3 December 1966): 8, <http://www.billboard.com/#/archive>

In the mid-1960s, the original partnership behind Southern Plastics decided to sell the business name and its manufacturing equipment and lease out the building. The enterprise went first to Ed Turnley, who had worked as a manager of the business, and then to a conglomerate headed by Texan businessman, Bill Dillard.⁴³ By 1971, however, the company was in receivership and no rent was being paid on the 453 Chestnut Street building. This state of affairs prompted two key figures from the original Southern Plastics – John Dunn and Ozell Simpkins – to form the new company of United Record Pressing and repossess the plant and the presses. Two other figures behind this new company were Ronnie Yearwood and Joe Talbot.⁴⁴ Talbot was a steel guitar-playing law graduate and music publisher. Yearwood was an accountant. This pair had set up a small custom record manufacturer called Precision Record Pressing in 1967, and Yearwood, Talbot and Simpkins were also in charge of a company called MFP Inc, which supplied label, jackets and electroplating services to pressing plants.⁴⁵ On August 14, 1971, *Billboard* reported that the plant at 453 Chestnut Street was being renovated in preparation for the United Record Pressing's occupation of it (although it is not clear in what way) and that production would begin in "approximately two weeks."⁴⁶

During the 1970s, many major record companies began to phase out their in-house pressing facilities, so business at United Record Pressing was brisk, enabling it to become the largest independent record pressing plant in the Southeast.⁴⁷ During the 1980s, the company pressed its last notable string of successful single releases with the gold and platinum selling songs of Lionel Richie. However, during the latter part of that decade, the compact disc was making significant inroads into the market and in 1988, CD sales overtook those of vinyl for the first time.⁴⁸ A small niche consumer base for vinyl persisted. It included DJs, whose dance-floor sounds necessitated the manipulation of discs on turntables, and rap and hip-hop artists who required the format for their "scratch" techniques.⁴⁹ Customers like these kept United Record Pressing in business throughout the 1990s. Even so, when former corporate executive Cris Ashworth bought the company in the late 1990s, he described operations within the plant as "the most antiquated thing you ever saw."⁵⁰ There were three old computers and ten employees who worked one shift a day.⁵¹ Within days of the deal confirming Ashworth's purchase, John Dunn died. Talbot decided to retire, but Simpkins elected to stay on to show Ashworth the ropes of the record pressing business and actually remained with the company for another seven years as "Chairman Emeritus."⁵²

(accessed September 12, 2012).

⁴³ Ingram, personal communication with author, September 5, 2012. Andy Bradley and Roger Wood, *House of Hits: The Story of Houston's Gold Star/Sugar Hill Recording Studios* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 177.

⁴⁴ "Talbot, Yearwood and Simpkins Pool Firms; Buy Plastics," *Billboard* (14 August 1971): 3, <http://www.billboard.com/#/archive> (accessed September 4, 2012). John Dunn, letter to Martin Hawkins, March 12, 1982, (copy supplied to author by Hawkins). Southern Plastics continued to exist for some years as a separate concern.

⁴⁵ Jim Talbot, interview by Douglas B Green, transcript, March 15, 1974, Frist Library and Archive of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

⁴⁶ "Talbot, Yearwood and Simpkins Pool Firms; Buy Plastics," 3.

⁴⁷ Robert Oermann, "Record Pressers See 'Up & Down' Year," *Tennessean*, 29 January 1985, N.P.

⁴⁸ Janes Gibbs Dubose, "Compact disc sales send albums, singles spinning," *Nashville Banner*, 6 February 1989, n.p..

⁴⁹ McCall, 28.

⁵⁰ Ashworth, personal communication with author, September 4, 2012.

⁵¹ Ashworth, personal communication with author, September 4, 2012. McCall, 20-21.

⁵² "Still groovy: After more than 40 years, vinyl still rules at United Record Pressing," *Nashville Business Journal* (15 November 2006), <http://www.bizjournals.com/nashville/stories/2006/11/20/smallb1.html> (accessed August 10, 2012).

Ashworth had previously worked for Nashville Gas as well as various health care, telecommunications and book publishing ventures. Under his ownership, operations at 453 Chestnut Street expanded considerably and he set out to “fully utilize the building and put in more manufacturing capacity.”⁵³ He struck a deal with another Nashville pressing plant, Dixie Record Pressing, which was winding down its business, to purchase that company’s pressing machines (which had been designed by Simpkins). At that point, United Record Pressing - which had previously been dedicated to pressing 45 rpms - began to press ten- and twelve-inch records as well.⁵⁴ Some years later, Ashworth also struck a deal with Universal Music, who had a pressing plant in New York State, and bought their pressing machines which doubled the capacity of the plant. Another move that took place under Ashworth was the purchase of the property adjacent to the pressing plant which had originally been built to house a plant for a company that printed and fabricated record jackets.⁵⁵ United Record Pressing had long rented the basement of this building to house the electroplating part of the production process (the stage of production which creates the stampers that are then used to press the records) but following this purchase, it moved its shipping and storage to that site, which in turn allowed more room for pressing machines within the original building.

Meanwhile the market for vinyl began to regain lost ground. Techno, hip-hop and dance club records continued to be a mainstay, as were those supplied to jukebox vendors who used 45-rpm singles in their machines. In addition, demand for LPs began to rise again. Since the mid-2000s, many new releases within all genres of music have been issued on vinyl alongside CD and digital versions. United Record Pressing has also pressed new versions of classic albums by artists such as Bob Dylan, The Byrds, The Beatles, Johnny Cash, and Jimi Hendrix.⁵⁶

In 2007, Cris Ashworth sold the company to a group of investors headed by the Chicago-based businessman Mark Michaels. In the following two years, American vinyl sales nearly tripled, sales of turntables also rose and the country’s largest music retailer, Best Buy, began selling a limited selection of LPs.⁵⁷ In August 2009, Michaels was invited to appear on WNYC’s radio show about music, *Soundcheck*, to talk about comeback of vinyl. During the broadcast he commented that:

A lot of different people are buying vinyl. You certainly have audiophiles that have always loved vinyl and they continue to buy vinyl; I think you have baby-boomers that kind of grew up on vinyl and got away from it as digital came to prominence and I think they’re coming back to it; and then, importantly, you have college kids and post-college kids that are buying turntables and are buying vinyl in droves. So when I look at what we’re pressing - for the audiophiles, we might be pressing Miles Davis or John Coltrane or an old Bob Dylan reissue; for the baby-boomers, we’re pressing Supertramp and Van Morrison and Simon & Garfunkel; and for the college kids, we’ll press the White Stripes

⁵³ Ashworth, personal communication with author, September 4, 2012.

⁵⁴ Richard Lawson, “‘Vinyl Rules!’ at Nashville business: United Record keeps long-play albums from extinction,” *Tennessean*, 10 December 2002, 1E; McCall, 28. Dixie’s owner, James Gann, moved to United Record Pressing and took charge of its shipping operations.

⁵⁵ Ashworth, personal communication with author, September 4, 2012.

⁵⁶ Robert Oermann, personal communication with David Currey, November 3, 2011. (Copy supplied to author by Oermann).

⁵⁷ “When Vinyl Sales Spin Upward,” radio feature on *Soundcheck*, WNYC, August 5, 2009, <http://soundcheck.wnyc.org/2009/aug/05/when-vinyl-sales-spin-upward/> (accessed September 5, 2012).

and Kings of Leon and The Yeah Yeah Yeahs, and Morrissey, so we're seeing growth from all segments of the market.⁵⁸

United Record Pressing is now one of the largest vinyl record pressing plants in the USA. It does all the pressing for the Universal, Sony, and Beggars Banquet labels. The Nashville-based, Jack White-owned outfit Third Man Records is another important client. The United Record Pressing plant offers weekly tours of its building to the public. The hospitality area on the second floor is part of this tour and the interior furnishings in this area have been preserved as much as possible to resemble how they looked when the plant first opened. This part of the plant has also recently become a venue for video shoots (Wanda Jackson and Jack White worked together on one) and a series of live recordings. This live recordings series is a new venture for the company and the sessions take place in the events room. The artists recorded *in situ* to date include Brendan Benson, Cory Chisel, the Smoke Fairies, Jeff and the Brotherhood, North Mississippi All Stars, and Keane.⁵⁹

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The United Record Pressing plant is an early-1960s industrial building. It is a flat roofed structure that faces northwest and is utilitarian in appearance except for an aqua-blue ceramic tile on part of the front façade (Figure 6). For the purpose of this description the front façade will be designated north. The building is banked into a hill at its northwest corner, exposing most of the ground floor at the east side and rear. Its elevation has a two-part form that includes a lower section wrapping around the east and south sides (ground and main floor) and a taller section at part of the north and west (two floors plus penthouse) (Figure 7).
2. Condition of fabric: Good. There is a remarkable survival of interior finishes in the hospitality areas.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The building is approximately 100-feet wide across its north and south elevations and 120-feet along its east and west elevations. Originally it had a square footprint of 100 feet, 10 inches by 100 feet, 10 inches.
2. Foundations: The pressing plant has poured concrete foundations.
3. Walls: The majority of the walls are plain concrete blocks, painted white. The northwest section of the front façade, which includes the higher penthouse section, is largely covered with a decorative arrangement of two-inch square ceramic tiles in a range of aqua-blue shades. Yellow tiles, arranged in rows three tiles thick, have been used to create two horizontal stripes and two vertical stripes that meet to the top left corner of the front façade. In between the two horizontal yellow stripes, the name "United Record Pressing" is displayed using raised red

⁵⁸ Mark Michaels, interview by Jacqueline Cincotta, radio report, "Vinyl Presses on in Nashville" *Soundcheck*, WNYC, August 5, 2009, <http://www.wnyc.org/shows/soundcheck/2009/aug/05/vinyl-presses-on-in-nashville/> (accessed August 15, 2012).

⁵⁹ Millar, personal communication with author, August 3, 2012.

plastic lettering.⁶⁰ A logo depicting two vinyl records of differing sizes and fashioned from anodized aluminum is situated at the point where the vertical and horizontal yellow stripes meet. To the east of the main door are three decorative randomly spaced sets of small yellow tile squares superimposed over larger red tile squares. On the top corner of the northern part of the west elevation of the main building, there is square sign displaying the modern black and white logo of United Record Pressing.

4. Structural system, framing: Load-bearing concrete block walls with a combination of precast concrete posts and beams, and poured concrete floor slabs. The c. 1966 addition has steel roof trusses.
5. Porches, stoops: The north (front) façade of the main building has a concrete stoop with four steps leading to an entrance with a shallow aluminum overhang. On the west elevation of the main building there is a metal dogleg fire-escape towards the rear that travels down to the parking level. At the west elevation of the main building towards the rear south corner, there is a concrete loading dock covered with a corrugated plastic roof supported by metal posts. The loading dock stretches across the full façade of the rear production part of the main building and it is accessed via a concrete ramp. It is sheltered by a corrugated plastic overhang. On the east elevation of the rear production area, there is a smaller loading dock accessed via a straight run of metal stairs parallel to the wall. It is sheltered by a corrugated metal overhang.
6. Chimneys: There is a utilitarian brick chimney on the east façade of the main building which is painted white.⁶¹
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is an industrial aluminum and glass two-leaf door set between concrete piers with fixed side lights and transom. The concrete piers flanking the door support a shallow aluminum overhang that extends across three quarters of this part of the building's façade including the window wall to the west edge of the building. The stairs leading to the entrance are flanked by poured concrete planters equal in length to that part of the front facade and filled with mature shrubs. The doorways at the loading docks are set directly into the concrete block walls. The typical door is a utilitarian metal with one or two leaves. In the east elevation there is a set of two leaf metal doors with glazing above the center rail with six square lights that have been painted over.
 - b. Windows: The office section of the main building, which is adjacent to the main entrance, has a fixed aluminum sash window wall on the west lower half of the north (front) façade with insulated porcelain spandrels behind the concrete planters. Mullions in the window wall create an upper row of transoms with larger lights below.

There are openings at the kitchen and the bedroom of the hospitality suite in penthouse that consist of French windows with three lights in each leaf. The living room has a fixed

⁶⁰ As mentioned above, the original drawings indicate that when the plant was first built, the name of the company at that time - "Southern Plastics, Inc." - was prominently displayed on the front façade close to where the words "United Record Pressing" are today. However, the original lettering appears to have been both larger and placed lower than those in existence today. The logo with the two records was in the original plans. See Figure 5.

⁶¹ The original drawings indicate that this chimney was not part of the original design.

eight light metal sash at the center flanked by four light casement windows. There is another window with the same configuration at the first floor by the loading dock on the west side of the building.

8. Roof: The flat roof is covered by a flat rubber membrane with ballasts and is surrounded by a parapet with metal coping.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The building is divided into offices, production areas, and hospitality/meeting space in the penthouse. The site slopes down to the southeast, allowing the ground floor to be at grade there and the first (or main) floor to be at grade on the west. The largely open production areas and associated small storage and equipment rooms occupy the ground floor and majority of the first floor. The front part of the main floor adjacent to the Chestnut Street entrance is given over to a reception area and offices. The penthouse above this part of the building contains a hospitality area which includes a large events room and a living room with bar, a full bathroom, a double occupancy bedroom and a kitchen, now dubbed the Motown Suite (Figure 8). All the rooms on this level are accessed via a double loaded corridor.

The label-making machinery and the steam boilers that fuel production are both located on the ground floor while the vinyl record pressing takes place on the first floor. Neither of the two main elements of pre-production - that is, the creation of the lacquers that act as the templates for the vinyl records and the creation of the nickel stampers which are impressed on the vinyl - take place within the building. The creation of the lacquers is outsourced and the making of the stampers occurs in the basement of a neighboring building that was acquired in 1998 by United Record Pressing.⁶² Another key element of production, the fabrication of the record sleeves, has never been done in-house and these are shipped to the plant from elsewhere.

PRE-PRODUCTION

The first stage in the making of a vinyl record is the delivery of the original recording that is to be put onto the disc. Recordings arrive at United Record Pressing offices in a variety of formats including on CD, via digital files, and on analogue tapes. This recording is then used to cut a lacquer master that is formed with grooves that reproduce the sound waves of the original recording. The master then serves as template for the vinyl disc. This stage of production is out-sourced and the lacquer master is then returned to the United Record Pressing and taken to the neighboring building in which the electroplating facility is housed.

In the electroplating facility, the lacquer master is sprayed with a thin layer of silver, placed on a spindle and then dunked into an electroplating tank which is filled with a nickel chloride solution and which also contains raw nickel. Over the course of ninety minutes of immersion in the tank, a layer of nickel adheres to each side of the silver-coated lacquer template. Once the lacquer and the spindle are removed from the tank, this nickel layer is peeled off either side of the lacquer master, creating in the process two negative metal stampers - one for the A side of the record, the other for the B side - which can then be used to press the sound grooves into the vinyl. Several copies of the nickel stampers are created as they last for only in the region of a thousand pressings.⁶³

⁶² Register of Deeds, Davidson County, Tennessee, deed book 11225, page 461.

⁶³ Nickel stampers that are faulty or which have been used for a full run of discs are saved and sold by the pound to companies that can use them in, for example, the production of car bumpers or motorcycle handlebars.

PRODUCTION

The chief ingredient within the production process is the vinyl itself which is shipped in from facilities around the world and arrives in the form of small pellets. The most common form is the black pellets which are delivered in one ton totes. All other hues of pellet arrive in smaller sacks. The raw vinyl pellets are brought into the plant via the rear loading bay and are stored on the ground floor. They are transported to the main floor, where the vinyl pressing takes place, in two ways. They are either taken manually in the sacks and totes via an elevator or are fed into an automated suction tube that connects to containers on the main floor.

The actual vinyl record pressing takes place within three large open rooms on the main floor of the pressing plant where the pressing machines are mostly laid out in long lines (Figure 9).⁶⁴ The majority of these machines were made by the Nashville based company Southern Machine & Tool Corp, and by Lened. Some of the pressing machines are fed automatically with pellets that are suctioned out of their main floor containers and transported via pipes to the equipment. The sound of the pellets shuttling through the pipes is audible in parts of the production floor. Others are manually fed with the pellets using large scoops.

One of the oldest of the machines is a manually-operated press which is primarily used to make test pressings, although it may also be used for very small runs of custom records.⁶⁵ Test pressings are always made prior to the full production run of records in order to check for quality. These test pressings are listened to for sound quality in-house and, once they have passed the “internal ears” test, they are sent to the client for final approval. Once that approval is obtained, the resulting pressing run is handled by the automated machines.

In the cases of both the manual and the automated machines, the process is the same. The vinyl pellets are fed into the machine, with the quantity of pellets used being dependent on the size and weight of the disc to be pressed.⁶⁶ The pellets are then heated to about 250 degrees Fahrenheit which causes them to become soft. They are then squeezed into a metal cup where they form a fat and very hot “biscuit” that is flat on the top and bottom. At this point, the record’s labels for both the A and B sides are applied to the biscuit and the mass is then placed onto a spike and moved to sit between the two pads to which the two nickel stampers have been attached. The A-side stamper is on the bottom and the B-side stamper is on the top. Around six thousand pounds of pressure is then brought to bear on the nickel-vinyl-label mass so that the vinyl is pressed into all the grooves of the nickel stamper and the label is pressed into the vinyl (a process which precludes the need for the use of any separate adhesive). While the pressing action is taking place, steam measuring around 350 degrees Fahrenheit is released around the nickel plates to keep the vinyl hot and soft. During this process, excess vinyl is forced out from around the edge of the stampers. At the point at which the pressure is

⁶⁴ The pressing originally took place in only one of these areas, and the rest of the production space at this level was given over to shipping and storage; however, since the company purchased the neighboring building, pressing activities within main building have been expanded, additional equipment has been acquired, and the bulk of the shipping and storage is now housed within the secondary building.

⁶⁵ When the plant was first built, all the machines were manual. Ozell Simpkins, along with colleague Bill West, helped design the automated machines in 1972. See McCall, 26.

⁶⁶ United Record Pressing presses seven-inch, ten-inch and twelve-inch records. The standard record weight is between 120 and 130 grams although some clients request heavier weights of up to 180 grams. The actual weight of the record may differ slightly from the requested weight because of the nature of the production process.

released, there comes a rush of 150 degree Fahrenheit temperature water which cools the vinyl disc down and helps to set it. The still-warm vinyl disc is then placed between two trim pads and spun while the excess vinyl is trimmed off. This excess vinyl is ground back down to make fresh vinyl pellets known as "regrind;" up to ten percent a standard weight black record pressing may consist of regrind.

Every record that comes off the presses is visually checked for quality and about one disc each hour is also submitted to an aural playback inspection. The rejection rate of records is very high and any deemed unsatisfactory are also slated for regrind. However, in order to be fit to be reground, they first they have to be taken to a machine dedicated to blowing out the central area of the disc to which the label has been fixed, as vinyl with paper on is not recyclable. The records that do pass muster are placed into inner sleeves and then into the cardboard jackets which have been brought in from elsewhere, and are transported via a cart to the secondary building.

The United Record Pressing plant also contains an area on the ground floor dedicated to the creation of the record labels. The labels produced in-house consist of one background color - which is provided by colored paper - and one color of ink to be used in printing the paper. (For more complicated color schemes or for very intricate patterns, the label making is outsourced.) Customers supply the artwork and from that, the label paper is selected, then metal plates are created which are used to print the ink onto the label. These are connected to the metal drums on the label printing machines. The majority of the labels are printed on three 1950s Davidson 500 machines. The drums on these machines roll through the ink and one sheet of labels is printed at a time. The labels have to dry for twenty-four hours minimum and are then trimmed down on a die-cutting machine in batches of around two hundred. A hole is then drilled into the center of these batches on a machine operated by a foot pedal. The labels are baked in Grieve industrial ovens to ensure that any excess moisture evaporates, as moisture would adversely affect the manner in which the labels adhere to the vinyl. Adjacent to the label making area is the boiler room which contains two large boiler tanks that are used to create the steam and water needed in the vinyl pressing process.

POST PRODUCTION

After the records have been placed in their inner and outer sleeves and transported via a hand cart to the secondary building, they receive all the final elements of their packaging, including application of any necessary labels and shrink-wrapping. They are then shipped out to their designated delivery destinations.

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

There are storage areas throughout the production area of the plant. These consist of shelving units filled with square envelopes that contain everything necessary to produce a rerun of a previously pressed record - including a copies of the test pressing, the specifications regarding the size and weight of the record, details of how to locate the label, a set of stampers, a sample of the jacket, as well as any other inserts used in the original pressing. There are also a number of subsidiary rooms throughout the production area where various auxiliary tasks are performed. One of the subsidiary rooms within the ground floor area has been recently converted into a workshop for the repair and maintenance of the pressing plant's machinery, as new parts are no longer available for much of the equipment.

2. Stairways: There is an interior stairway close to the main entrance that runs between the main floor and the penthouse. It is a closed concrete dogleg stair with halfpace landings and there

are wall-mounted handrails on both sides. A second stairway, similarly configured, runs between the main floor and the ground floor and is centrally placed within the building.

3. Flooring: In the production areas, the flooring is mostly bare concrete although there are also areas in which the concrete has been painted. In one of the offices, the floor is covered with commercial carpet. Elsewhere in the reception and office area and throughout most of the penthouse floor, a mix of original and replacement linoleum and vinyl nine-inch square tile flooring is in place. The original finish schedule drawing notes "rubber tile" for the hall, dining room, and kitchen, and a product called "vinyl slate" for the lounge. In the main floor reception area, the office to its rear, the main floor corridor and the penthouse events room, dark and light orange linoleum tiles are laid in an alternating pattern of large and small squares. In the corridor of the penthouse, black and white linoleum tiles are laid out in a checker-board design. The penthouse kitchen has red and white tiles laid out in a large block pattern. Plain tan linoleum tiles have been used in one of the ground floor offices as well as in the penthouse bedroom and living room. There is an applied six-inch white vinyl baseboard in all the linoleum tiled areas. The floor of the bathroom within the "Motown Suite" has one inch ceramic tile in shades of blue/grey in a random pattern and the baseboard is formed of six inch blue ceramic tile.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The wall finishes are either painted concrete block or faux wood-grain plastic laminate paneling. There are drop tile acoustic ceilings in the office and meeting areas and unfinished ceilings in the production areas.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and Doors: The typical interior door is a simple wood or hollow core door set into a utilitarian metal frame. Within the production areas, doors are mostly hollow framed metal doors with windows.
 - b. Windows: There is no particular interior trim to the windows. They are unornamented metal set directly into the concrete walls.
6. Decorative features and trim: None noted.
7. Hardware: Hardware throughout is simple industrial metal knobs and hinges.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: The United Record Pressing Plant was built with a forced air HVAC system and a central air system at time of construction. Wall fans perforate the walls in a number of areas. Two large steam boilers were also installed within the ground floor for production purposes.
 - b. Lighting: The typical light fixture in the office areas is a fluorescent tube fixture incorporated into the acoustic tile ceiling. Fluorescent tube fixtures are also used throughout the production areas, where they hang below the unfinished ceiling. In the hospitality areas there are a variety of period lighting fixtures including hanging glass or metal pendant lamps and square plastic and metal fixtures incorporated into the ceilings.

- c. Plumbing: The United Pressing Plant was built with plumbing for production and bathroom use. The typical bathroom fixture is white and utilitarian.
- d. Elevator: There is a freight elevator traveling between the ground and main floors near the staircase at the center of the plan.
- e. Production equipment: The building houses machinery for making labels (which includes cutting and dying) and record pressing equipment. Davidson is the make of the majority of the label-printing machines. The label-baking ovens are manufactured by Grieve. The majority of the vinyl pressing machines bear the mark of SMT (Southern Machine & Tool Corp of Nashville, Tennessee) although there are also some made by Lened. The two large production boilers were manufactured by Hurst, and Cleaver Brooks respectively.

D. Site:

- 1. Historic landscape design: The main entrance to the building is set back and elevated from the street level and is reached via a series of short runs of three or four steps separated by wide landings. The site slope downs towards the southeast exposing more of the structure on those sides and because of that, there is a lower level walkout on the east side. The parking lot is placed to the west at a higher grade.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: Copies of the original drawings for the United Record Pressing/Southern Plastics plant were supplied by HFR Design.

B. Interviews:

Bulleit, Jim. Interview by Douglas B Green. Transcript. February 10, 1976. Frist Library and Archive of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

---. Interview by John Rumble. Transcript. May, 4, 1983. Frist Library and Archive of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

Michaels, Mark. Interview by Jacqueline Cincotta. Radio report. "Vinyl Presses on in Nashville", Soundcheck, WNYC, August 5, 2009.
<http://www.wnyc.org/shows/soundcheck/2009/aug/05/vinyl-presses-on-in-nashville/>
(accessed August 15, 2012).

Talbot, Jim. Interview by Douglas B Green. Transcript. March 15, 1974. Frist Library and Archive of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

D. Selected Bibliography:

Published Sources and Reports

Bradley, Andy and Roger Wood. *House of Hits: The Story of Houston's Gold Star/Sugar Hill Recording Studios*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Broven, John. *Record Makers and Breakers: Voices of the Independent Rock 'n' Roll Pioneers*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Escott, Colin. "Bullet Records." In *The Encyclopedia of Country Music*, ed. Paul Kingsbury, 65. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Hawkins, Martin. *A Shot in the Dark: Making Records in Nashville, 1945-55*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press/Country Music Foundation Press, 2007.

Scaruffi, Piero. *A History of Rock Music 1951-2000*. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, Inc, 2003.

Collections, Repositories and Archives

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE:

Davidson County Register of Deeds: Property deeds.

Frist Library and Archive of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum: Clippings files and journal archives.

Metro Archives: Clippings files, property deeds and maps.

Metro Historical Commission: National Register of Historic Places nomination documents and clippings files,

Nashville Room, Nashville Public Library: City Directories, downtown survey, clippings files, maps, photo archives and microfilms.

Tennessee State Library and Archives: Records of business incorporation and microfilms.

Websites

Billboard archive, <http://www.billboard.com/#/archive>

HFR Design, <http://www.hfrdesign.com/pages/about-hfr.php>

United Record Pressing, <http://www.urpressing.com/history.php>

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Written Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documentation of the United Record Pressing Plant was undertaken as part of the 2012 HABS-SAH Sally Kress Tompkins Fellowship. The Fellowship is jointly sponsored by HABS and the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) to allow a graduate student to work on a HABS history project. Rachel Hopkin (Western Kentucky University), 2012 Fellow, produced historical reports for several buildings related to the development of Nashville's music industry. HABS is within the Heritage Documentation Programs (HDP) division of the National Park Service (Catherine Lavoie, Chief, HABS; Richard O'Connor, Chief, HDP). Project planning was coordinated by Lisa P. Davidson, HABS historian and Chair, HABS-SAH Sally Kress Tompkins Fellowship Committee. Assistance was provided by Tim Walker, Executive Director, Nashville Metropolitan Historical Commission, and by Robbie Jones, Historic Nashville Inc. In addition, the assistance of Martin Hawkins,

Jay Millar (Director of Marketing, United Record Pressing), John Rumble (Senior Historian, Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum), Robert Oermann (journalist and writer), Jana Talbot and Kim Yearwood is gratefully acknowledged.

PART V: ILLUSTRATIONS

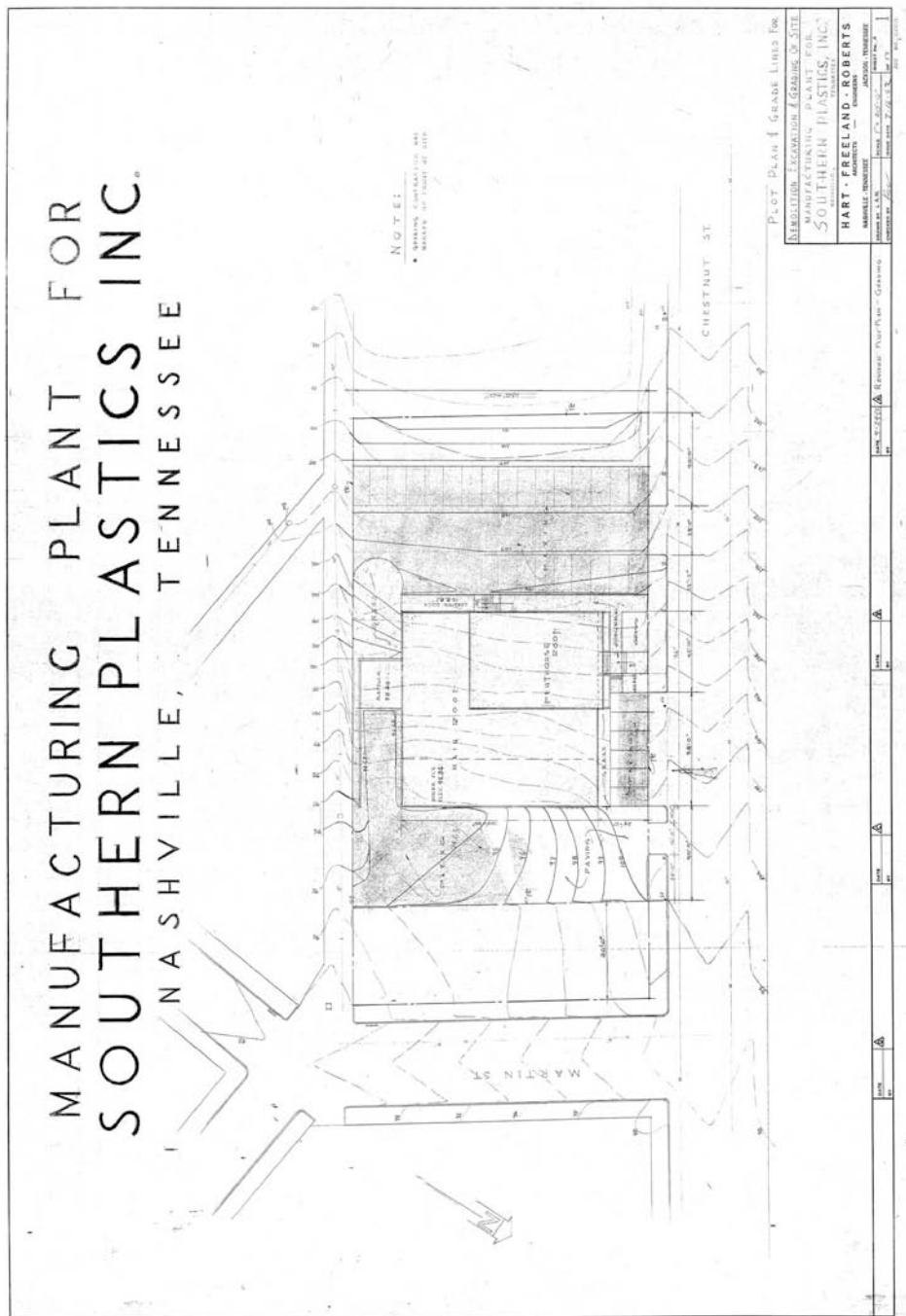


Figure 1: Site plan for the Southern Plastic Inc. Pressing Plant, 16 July 1962
Source: Copies of original drawings supplied by HFR Design.

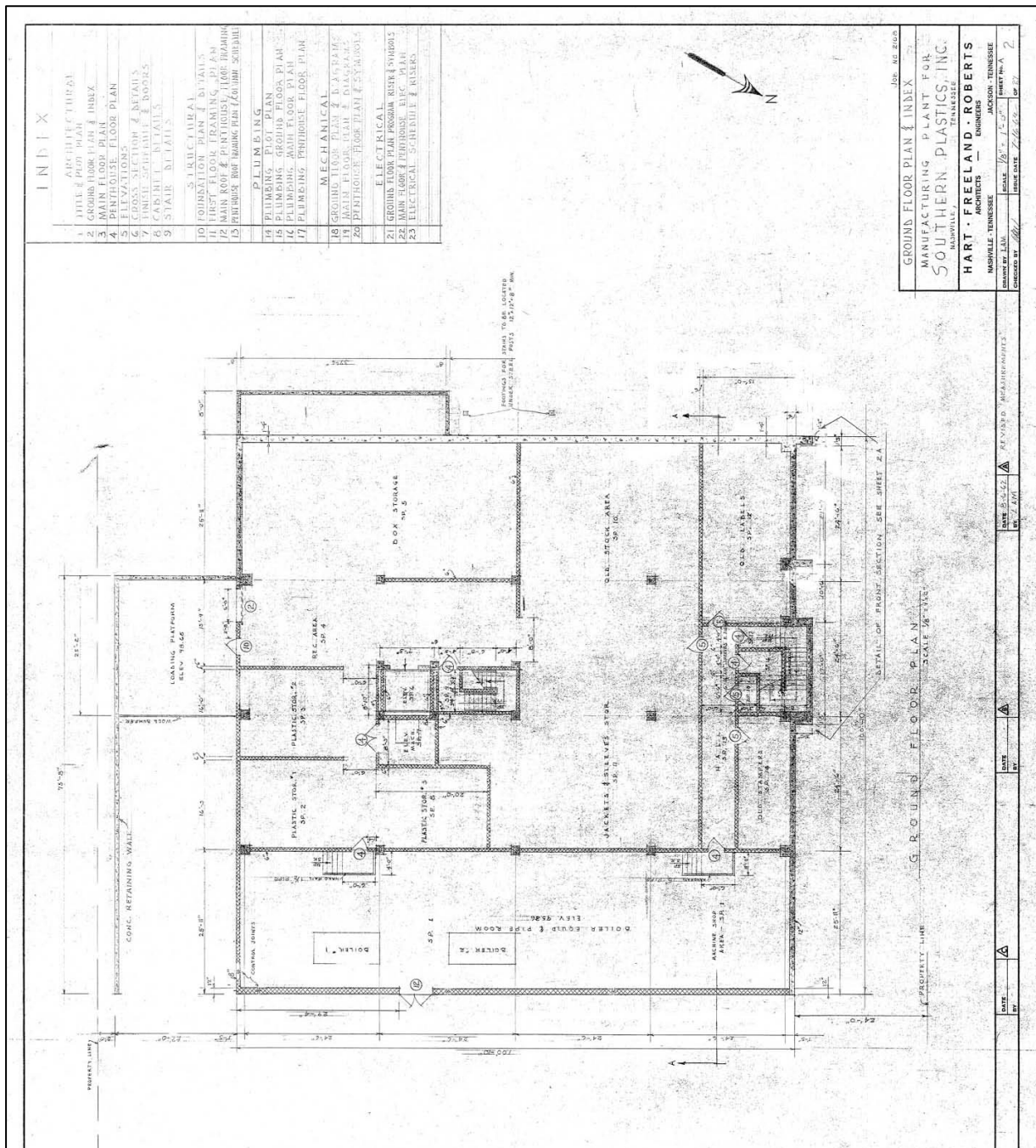


Figure 2: Ground floor plan of the Southern Plastic Inc. Pressing Plant, 16 July 1962.
Source: Copies of original drawings supplied by HFR Design.

PROPERTY LINE

LOADING PLATFORM

SHIPPING OFFICE 5P.33

STOCK ROOM 5P.40

INSPECTION ROOM 5P.35

LENS WASHING TROUGH WITH WATER SUPPLY AND WASTE WATER DRAIN

WOMEN'S ROOM 5P.34

LENS ROOM 5P.32

STOCK ROOM 5P.31

STOCK ROOM 5P.30

STOCK ROOM 5P.29

STOCK ROOM 5P.28

STOCK ROOM 5P.27

STOCK ROOM 5P.26

STOCK ROOM 5P.25

STOCK ROOM 5P.24

STOCK ROOM 5P.23

STOCK ROOM 5P.22

STOCK ROOM 5P.21

STOCK ROOM 5P.20

STOCK ROOM 5P.19

STOCK ROOM 5P.18

STOCK ROOM 5P.17

STOCK ROOM 5P.16

STOCK ROOM 5P.15

STOCK ROOM 5P.14

STOCK ROOM 5P.13

STOCK ROOM 5P.12

STOCK ROOM 5P.11

STOCK ROOM 5P.10

STOCK ROOM 5P.9

STOCK ROOM 5P.8

STOCK ROOM 5P.7

STOCK ROOM 5P.6

STOCK ROOM 5P.5

STOCK ROOM 5P.4

STOCK ROOM 5P.3

STOCK ROOM 5P.2

STOCK ROOM 5P.1

STOCK ROOM 5P.0

STOCK ROOM 5P.-1

STOCK ROOM 5P.-2

STOCK ROOM 5P.-3

STOCK ROOM 5P.-4

STOCK ROOM 5P.-5

STOCK ROOM 5P.-6

STOCK ROOM 5P.-7

STOCK ROOM 5P.-8

STOCK ROOM 5P.-9

STOCK ROOM 5P.-10

STOCK ROOM 5P.-11

STOCK ROOM 5P.-12

STOCK ROOM 5P.-13

STOCK ROOM 5P.-14

STOCK ROOM 5P.-15

STOCK ROOM 5P.-16

STOCK ROOM 5P.-17

STOCK ROOM 5P.-18

STOCK ROOM 5P.-19

STOCK ROOM 5P.-20

STOCK ROOM 5P.-21

STOCK ROOM 5P.-22

STOCK ROOM 5P.-23

STOCK ROOM 5P.-24

STOCK ROOM 5P.-25

STOCK ROOM 5P.-26

STOCK ROOM 5P.-27

STOCK ROOM 5P.-28

STOCK ROOM 5P.-29

STOCK ROOM 5P.-30

STOCK ROOM 5P.-31

STOCK ROOM 5P.-32

STOCK ROOM 5P.-33

STOCK ROOM 5P.-34

STOCK ROOM 5P.-35

STOCK ROOM 5P.-36

STOCK ROOM 5P.-37

STOCK ROOM 5P.-38

STOCK ROOM 5P.-39

STOCK ROOM 5P.-40

STOCK ROOM 5P.-41

STOCK ROOM 5P.-42

STOCK ROOM 5P.-43

STOCK ROOM 5P.-44

STOCK ROOM 5P.-45

STOCK ROOM 5P.-46

STOCK ROOM 5P.-47

STOCK ROOM 5P.-48

STOCK ROOM 5P.-49

STOCK ROOM 5P.-50

STOCK ROOM 5P.-51

STOCK ROOM 5P.-52

STOCK ROOM 5P.-53

STOCK ROOM 5P.-54

STOCK ROOM 5P.-55

STOCK ROOM 5P.-56

STOCK ROOM 5P.-57

STOCK ROOM 5P.-58

STOCK ROOM 5P.-59

STOCK ROOM 5P.-60

STOCK ROOM 5P.-61

STOCK ROOM 5P.-62

STOCK ROOM 5P.-63

STOCK ROOM 5P.-64

STOCK ROOM 5P.-65

STOCK ROOM 5P.-66

STOCK ROOM 5P.-67

STOCK ROOM 5P.-68

STOCK ROOM 5P.-69

STOCK ROOM 5P.-70

STOCK ROOM 5P.-71

STOCK ROOM 5P.-72

STOCK ROOM 5P.-73

STOCK ROOM 5P.-74

STOCK ROOM 5P.-75

STOCK ROOM 5P.-76

STOCK ROOM 5P.-77

STOCK ROOM 5P.-78

STOCK ROOM 5P.-79

STOCK ROOM 5P.-80

STOCK ROOM 5P.-81

STOCK ROOM 5P.-82

STOCK ROOM 5P.-83

STOCK ROOM 5P.-84

STOCK ROOM 5P.-85

STOCK ROOM 5P.-86

STOCK ROOM 5P.-87

STOCK ROOM 5P.-88

STOCK ROOM 5P.-89

STOCK ROOM 5P.-90

STOCK ROOM 5P.-91

STOCK ROOM 5P.-92

STOCK ROOM 5P.-93

STOCK ROOM 5P.-94

STOCK ROOM 5P.-95

STOCK ROOM 5P.-96

STOCK ROOM 5P.-97

STOCK ROOM 5P.-98

STOCK ROOM 5P.-99

STOCK ROOM 5P.-100

STOCK ROOM 5P.-101

STOCK ROOM 5P.-102

STOCK ROOM 5P.-103

STOCK ROOM 5P.-104

STOCK ROOM 5P.-105

STOCK ROOM 5P.-106

STOCK ROOM 5P.-107

STOCK ROOM 5P.-108

STOCK ROOM 5P.-109

STOCK ROOM 5P.-110

STOCK ROOM 5P.-111

STOCK ROOM 5P.-112

STOCK ROOM 5P.-113

STOCK ROOM 5P.-114

STOCK ROOM 5P.-115

STOCK ROOM 5P.-116

STOCK ROOM 5P.-117

STOCK ROOM 5P.-118

STOCK ROOM 5P.-119

STOCK ROOM 5P.-120

STOCK ROOM 5P.-121

STOCK ROOM 5P.-122

STOCK ROOM 5P.-123

STOCK ROOM 5P.-124

STOCK ROOM 5P.-125

STOCK ROOM 5P.-126

STOCK ROOM 5P.-127

STOCK ROOM 5P.-128

STOCK ROOM 5P.-129

STOCK ROOM 5P.-130

STOCK ROOM 5P.-131

STOCK ROOM 5P.-132

STOCK ROOM 5P.-133

STOCK ROOM 5P.-134

STOCK ROOM 5P.-135

STOCK ROOM 5P.-136

STOCK ROOM 5P.-137

STOCK ROOM 5P.-138

STOCK ROOM 5P.-139

STOCK ROOM 5P.-140

STOCK ROOM 5P.-141

STOCK ROOM 5P.-142

STOCK ROOM 5P.-143

STOCK ROOM 5P.-144

STOCK ROOM 5P.-145

STOCK ROOM 5P.-146

STOCK ROOM 5P.-147

STOCK ROOM 5P.-148

STOCK ROOM 5P.-149

STOCK ROOM 5P.-150

STOCK ROOM 5P.-151

STOCK ROOM 5P.-152

STOCK ROOM 5P.-153

STOCK ROOM 5P.-154

STOCK ROOM 5P.-155

STOCK ROOM 5P.-156

STOCK ROOM 5P.-157

STOCK ROOM 5P.-158

STOCK ROOM 5P.-159

STOCK ROOM 5P.-160

STOCK ROOM 5P.-161

STOCK ROOM 5P.-162

STOCK ROOM 5P.-163

STOCK ROOM 5P.-164

STOCK ROOM 5P.-165

STOCK ROOM 5P.-166

STOCK ROOM 5P.-167

STOCK ROOM 5P.-168

STOCK ROOM 5P.-169

STOCK ROOM 5P.-170

STOCK ROOM 5P.-171

STOCK ROOM 5P.-172

STOCK ROOM 5P.-173

STOCK ROOM 5P.-174

STOCK ROOM 5P.-175

STOCK ROOM 5P.-176

STOCK ROOM 5P.-177

STOCK ROOM 5P.-178

STOCK ROOM 5P.-179

STOCK ROOM 5P.-180

STOCK ROOM 5P.-181

STOCK ROOM 5P.-182

STOCK ROOM 5P.-183

STOCK ROOM 5P.-184

STOCK ROOM 5P.-185

STOCK ROOM 5P.-186

STOCK ROOM 5P.-187

STOCK ROOM 5P.-188

STOCK ROOM 5P.-189

STOCK ROOM 5P.-190

STOCK ROOM 5P.-191

STOCK ROOM 5P.-192

STOCK ROOM 5P.-193

STOCK ROOM 5P.-194

STOCK ROOM 5P.-195

STOCK ROOM 5P.-196

STOCK ROOM 5P.-197

STOCK ROOM 5P.-198

STOCK ROOM 5P.-199

STOCK ROOM 5P.-200

STOCK ROOM 5P.-201

STOCK ROOM 5P.-202

STOCK ROOM 5P.-203

STOCK ROOM 5P.-204

STOCK ROOM 5P.-205

STOCK ROOM 5P.-206

STOCK ROOM 5P.-207

STOCK ROOM 5P.-208

STOCK ROOM 5P.-209

STOCK ROOM 5P.-210

STOCK ROOM 5P.-211

STOCK ROOM 5P.-212

STOCK ROOM 5P.-213

STOCK ROOM 5P.-214

STOCK ROOM 5P.-215

STOCK ROOM 5P.-216

STOCK ROOM 5P.-217

STOCK ROOM 5P.-218

STOCK ROOM 5P.-219

STOCK ROOM 5P.-220

STOCK

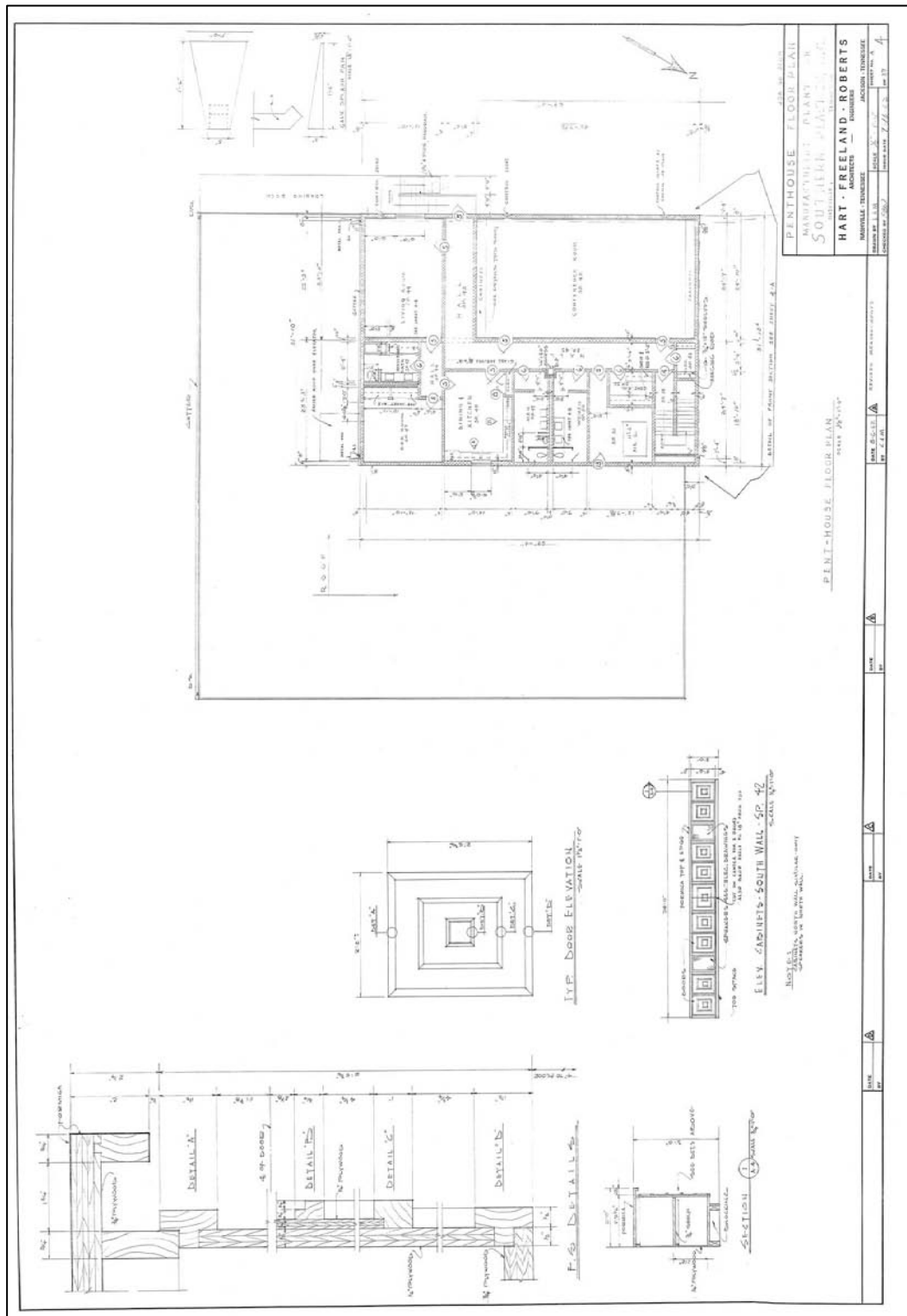


Figure 4: Penthouse level plan of the Southern Plastic Inc. Pressing Plant, 16 July 1962.
Source: Copies of original drawings supplied by HFR Design.

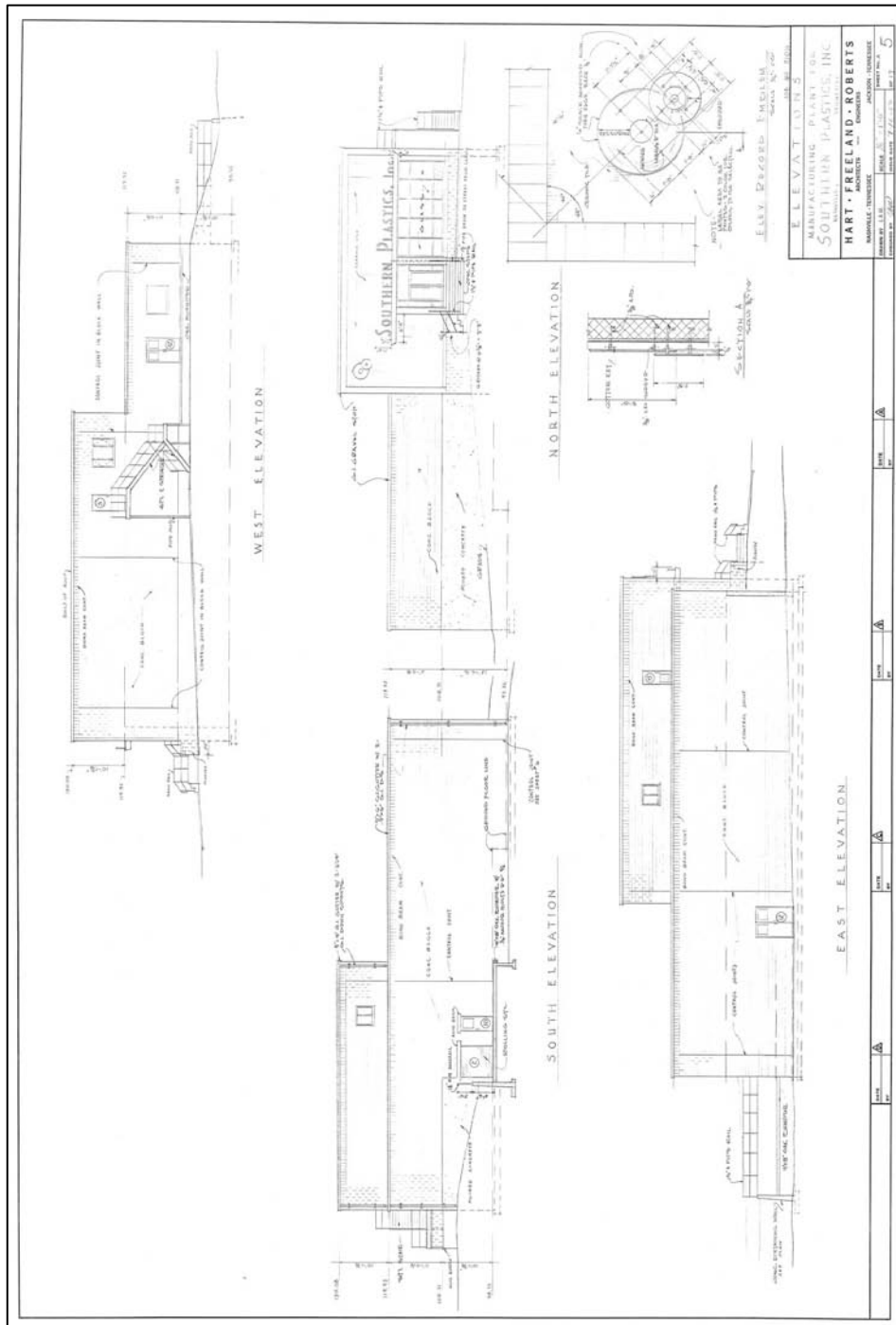


Figure 5: Elevation drawings of the Southern Plastic Inc. Pressing Plant, 16 July 1962.
Source: Copies of original drawings supplied by HFR Design.



Figure 6: The northwest façade of the United Record Pressing Plant.
Source: Photograph by author, July 18, 2012.



Figure 7: The north and west elevations of the United Record Pressing Plant.
Source: Photograph by Lisa P. Davidson, 18 July 2012.



Figure 8: The interior of the penthouse kitchen.
Source: Photograph by author, 18 July 2012.



Figure 9: A line of vinyl pressing machines on the main floor of the United Record Pressing Plant.
Source: Photograph by author, 18 July 2012.